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September 2023

News to Know

Federal Fiscal Year End Shutdown – Invoice/Reimbursement Processing Delays

The federal fiscal year 2023 shut down September 25. All federal payments are on hold until the new federal fiscal year opens mid-October.

Save The Date:

2024 Oversight & Compliance Workshops are scheduled from **February 5-9, 2024**, in Jefferson City. Each day will be the same workshop, so agencies only need to attend one day. Registration and information coming soon.

Agreements/Access Codes:

It is agreement season. Please remember that agency-assigned access codes used in DocuSign never change, regardless of program.

Performance Measure Reporting DUE

The following performance measure reporting was sent out on July 1 via email. If your agency did not receive, please send an email to MoTransit@modot.mo.gov to obtain forms.

Agency/Employee Spotlight

SMTS, Inc. Celebrates Half a Century of Public Transit in Missouri

In 1970, a group of Missouri volunteers attended the first White House Conference on Aging in Washington, D.C. to voice their concerns about the lack of public transit in our rural areas nationwide.

Then, in 1971, Older Adults Transportation Service (OATS) was founded by volunteers to provide service in five central Missouri counties.

In 1973, under the leadership of Mr. William “Bill” Osborne, a native of Fredericktown, MO, the same initiative was launched in one Southeast Missouri county. A van was soon donated by Turley Dodge and a volunteer driver stepped up

to the plate to assist in the logistics of the budding transit provider. It was decided that this organization would be identified as Southeast Missouri Transportation Service, Inc. Years later, the title was reduced to SMTS, Inc. for easier branding and identification. As word caught on, the demand for the service largely exceeded the capacity and growth began to expand the service into adjoining counties. Before we knew it, SMTS had expanded to three vans and three drivers, covering three counties. The service was growing, but sustaining it financially was definitely a struggle.



It wasn't until 1980 that help provided by federal funding became possible through formula funding sanctioned by the Federal Transit Administration and administered by the Missouri Department of Transportation. With additional monies available, the company was literally “on the move.” One-by-one, counties were added to SMTS’ footprint until it grew to encompass 20 of Missouri’s 114 counties, making SMTS the second largest rural transit provider in the nation!

Fast forward to 2023, half a century later, SMTS, Inc. has grown exponentially and covers 21 counties. The company has developed long term relationships with state and local funding sources to help meet the required local match to leverage the federal dollars needed to sustain the service. Without the local, state and federal dollars, SMTS could not exist, so we are grateful every day for our partners who recognize the value of Rural Public Transit. Pre-covid, SMTS provided 344,614 individual rides, drove 4,666,590 miles with our drivers banking 248,759 hours behind the wheels of our 200 vehicles.



Congratulations to SMTS for providing 50 years of rural public transportation service to southeast Missouri!

Denny Ward, SMTS Executive Director, announces retirement!

“Humbling.” That’s the one-word Denny Ward, executive director for SMTS, Inc. chose to describe how he feels about reaching this milestone. SMTS, one of Missouri’s 34 rural public transit providers, is recognized as the second largest rural transit provider in the nation. Starting with one donated vehicle, operating in one county, with only one driver, SMTS now covers 21 of Missouri’s 114 counties providing door-to-door service five days a week.

When asked for a profound statement that would sum up Ward’s perception of rural public transit, he deferred to William Osborne, the founding father and first executive director for SMTS for the following

quote: "Transportation is like water and electricity. You don't think about it until you don't have it, then you think about it a lot." William "Bill" Osborne served as the company's executive director from 1973 – 2013, at which time Denny was promoted to that position.

Hired in October of 2006 as the company's controller, Denny managed the company's budget, employees and fleet. In 2010, Denny was promoted to the position of assistant executive director. In this role, Denny was instrumental in re-branding the fleet with a more prolific graphic for better visibility and recognition. He also saw the opportunity for expanded services and began looking for additional local funding to increase revenues so the company could afford more vehicles and salaries. In January 2014, Denny was promoted to executive director.



During his tenure with the company, Denny is credited with tripling the company's budget and local support, doubling the company's fleet and employee base from 100 to 200, implementing two new Deviated Fixed Route Services across the 21 county region, adding one additional county to SMTS' service footprint, successfully constructing a new regional office in Butler County through the use of federal funding and is known by riders throughout the region for his compassion, dedication and determination to meet the need of anyone who is transportation deprived.

Denny's successors will be Mrs. Tracy Jones, SMTS current Director of Finance to the position of Chief Executive Officer and Mrs. Ginny Smith, current Director of Operations to the position of Chief Operations Officer.

Denny has been a great asset to SMTS, partner with MoDOT and advocating the transportation needs for rural public transit across Missouri. Congratulations on your retirement and best wishes on your next adventure!

MPTA Educational Series Events

Over the next several months, the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA) is hosting multiple educational events for members and interested citizens. All events will be virtual webinars. Consider registering for one or all today.

Upcoming Reporting

October 2023

NTD Reporting (Section 5311)

- Due October 1st

November 2023

DBE Reporting for period of April-September 2023 (Section 5311)

- Due November 8th

January 2024

2023 Title VI Survey (all programs)

DAMIS (Drug & Alcohol) Reporting

All reporting forms and related information will be sent out by Program Manager via email.

Notices on all above reporting will be sent through InTransit. A subscription link can be found at the bottom of this communication.

Upcoming Conferences

National RTAP 2023 Conference

Myrtle Beach, SC

December 3-6, 2023

2023 CTAA Expo

West Palm Beach, FL

June 9-12, 2024

Training Resources

National RTAP: <https://www.nationalrtap.org/>

Missouri RTAP: <https://mltrc.mst.edu/mortaphome/>

National Transit Institute (NTI) <https://www.ntionline.com/>

National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/>

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA): <https://ctaa.org/>

USDOT Drug and Alcohol: <https://www.transportation.gov/odapc>

FTA Drug and Alcohol: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/drug-alcohol-program>

FMCSA Drug and Alcohol: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/drug-alcohol-testing-program>

Visit our Website

For additional questions or concerns:

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